

It includes provisions to bolster our national security by strengthening our cyber security defense mechanisms.

This legislation will make significant strides for American energy policies, and it wouldn't have been possible without the bill managers' leadership and dedication. So I want to thank them again for their diligence in advancing this critical legislation closer to passage.

TRIBUTE TO POLICE CHIEF RICK MCCUBBIN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about my good friend Police Chief Rick McCubbin of the Bardstown Police Department. We learned yesterday that he will be retiring from service after 5 years as chief and nearly 30 years in law enforcement.

Chief McCubbin led his officers through some of the most troubling times in the police department's history. He did so with rigor and resolve, with grit and with grace.

Nearly 3 years ago, the Bardstown Police Department took a blow to its very core with the tragic assassination of Officer Jason Ellis, who was killed in an ambush while driving home in uniform and in a marked vehicle. Authorities have strong reason to believe the killing was retaliation from drug traffickers against a police department that was making significant progress in rooting out trafficking and making drug arrests.

Chief McCubbin was the leader of that effort to stamp out drug crime. He spoke eloquently on behalf of the whole department about the loss of their brother Jason, who will never be forgotten. I know that while the case remains unsolved today, he has led the effort to see Officer Ellis's killers brought to justice.

Chief McCubbin continued the fight against drug trafficking by seeing to it that Bardstown's surrounding Nelson County earned inclusion in the Appalachia High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program, which we call HIDTA, back in 2014. HIDTA is not just another government acronym but a model that works. It couples Federal law enforcement with State and local task forces and the supplies, training, and technology they need. By getting Nelson County included in the HIDTA program, Chief McCubbin brought a powerful force multiplier to his department's own efforts to fight drug trafficking and keep the citizens of Bardstown safe.

It has been an honor to work with Chief Rick McCubbin over the years. He received the honor of Kentucky's Police Chief of the Year in 2015, and I know the people of Bardstown and Nelson County certainly appreciate his diligence and determination to fight crime and to keep them safe. I thank him for his service to Bardstown, to Kentucky, and to the Nation.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

ENERGY BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the Republican leader talking positively about the Energy bill, which we called the energy efficiency bill in the last two Congresses, when we tried so hard under the direction of Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire to get this done. We tried so very hard. We had many runs at it. There were promises from the Republicans; I don't need to mention names, but they know who they are: Let's get back on this bill. We will get it done. We have only three amendments. We have only two amendments. We did that time after time over 4 years. Every time, the obstruction would not go away, and we could not do the bill.

I am grateful that we have a bill now dealing with energy efficiency. The name has been changed, but it is the same bill. I hope that Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire has some degree of pride over what she started a long time ago. Her name is not on the legislation anymore, and I appreciate the junior Senator from Washington and the senior Senator from Alaska working hard to bring it to the floor today. We brought it to the point where we are today as a result of a very long struggle.

The Republican leader talks about the many years since we have had an Energy bill. The reason we didn't have one 4 years sooner is that they wouldn't let us. Gridlock, obstruction—the Republicans blocked Energy bills any chance they got. They insisted on offering amendments that weren't germane or relevant.

We are not acting the way they did. We want to get it done also. It is important for our country, and it is a positive step forward. I want to make sure there is a full understanding of the history behind this.

OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING ANNIVERSARY AND NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 21 years ago today, in Oklahoma City at 9:02 a.m. Oklahoma City time, Timothy McVeigh detonated a bomb at the Federal building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 innocent people, and 19 of them were children who were there with their parents on business the family had. This was a work day, and Timothy McVeigh detonated that huge explosion. People could see the smoke from miles and miles away. It was the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil before 9/11.

I think we can all see—I know I can see in my mind's eye the images that were on television and the huge Federal building destroyed. It had been

ripped in half. I recall, as I am sure people within the sound of my voice recall, the images of chaos: bloody, disoriented victims trying to determine if they were alive, if they had their arms, if they had their legs, if they had their mind, if they had their eyes. As soon as they got that straightened out, they started desperately trying to find and assist the injured.

This was a heart-wrenching day for our Nation. People watched the aftermath and wanted to help in any way they could.

One of those eager to help was a lawyer from the Department of Justice named Merrick Garland. His boss at the time was a well-known political figure, Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick. She explained Garland's desire to go to Oklahoma City and help with the investigation. She said:

Both of us had kids about the ages of the kids in the day care center [in Washington]. We were just sick to our stomachs. And Merrick said, "I need to go."

Merrick Garland went home that evening knowing that he would be gone for a while. He kissed his wife and his children, and he arrived in Oklahoma City less than 48 hours later.

At this time, Garland was a seasoned Federal prosecutor, having served as U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia prior to taking a senior role in the Department of Justice. Those who knew him recall how competent he was. Having done some criminal defense work in my past, I know how difficult it is for somebody trying to defend somebody when you come up against a prosecutor with the reputation of Garland. They have a way about them to make the case simple in the minds of a judge and jury, even though there could be a very complicated set of facts. Those who worked with him recall him as unwavering in his commitment to the law. He followed the law. He followed procedure. He was guided by an acute sense of fairness. The New York Times reported:

Former colleagues also recalled that Mr. Garland insisted on doing the investigation by the book, like obtaining subpoenas even when phone and truck rental companies volunteered to simply hand over the evidence, to avoid any future trial problems. He also made sure there was a prosecutor responsible for keeping relatives and victims informed about the case as it developed.

In speech after speech, the senior Senator from Iowa has insisted that a nominee to the Supreme Court should be "supreme," should be someone who—and I quote him—"adheres to the Constitution and the rule of law and decides cases based on wherever the text takes him or her."

Merrick Garland is the person the senior Senator from Iowa described. With an entire nation wanting justice served immediately to those responsible for the bombing, Garland and his team refused to take shortcuts. They did it the right way. They did it the Garland way. They adhered to the law every step of the way.

So impressive was Mr. Garland throughout the investigation and prosecution, that Steven Jones, the attorney for Timothy McVeigh—listen to this. Here is what the attorney for McVeigh said about Merrick Garland.

Personally he's above reproach. He has integrity. He has the skills.

Merrick Garland was also devoted to the victims and their families. Claudia Denny was the mother of children in the building's daycare center. Her children were critically injured, but they survived. They are alive. This is what she said of Merrick Garland:

Early on we got invited to the U.S. attorney's office. They wanted all of our concerns, and I think Judge Garland set that up where we all got our voice heard.

The Oklahoma City prosecution ended with convictions and guilty pleas for all who were involved. To this day, Oklahomans still revere Merrick Garland for his good work. Frank Keating, the Governor of Oklahoma at the time of the attack, has been outspoken in his praise of Judge Garland. He told NPR recently:

People don't understand when they're eating a good dinner on Friday night, there is a chef in the kitchen that did it. And in the case of what we saw after April 19, there was a chef in the kitchen that did it, and it was Merrick Garland.

The junior Senator from Oklahoma recently praised Judge Garland saying, "I do plan to meet with Merrick Garland in my office in the weeks ahead to say thank you for what he did for Oklahoma during the bombing trial.

But that is as far as Senator LANKFORD has said he will go. He has made it clear that he will do nothing to help Garland get a hearing or a vote.

Following his work in the Oklahoma City case, Merrick Garland continued to work on other notable criminal cases. He oversaw the prosecution of the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski, this evil man who is now in prison. Garland ran the investigation on the Atlanta Olympics bombing. He then went on to serve with distinction on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, where he now serves as the chief judge.

Supreme Court Justice John Roberts once said of Garland's judicial expertise: "Anytime Judge Garland disagrees, you know you are in a difficult area." It is time for Republicans to allow the American people to see Merrick Garland themselves, not have me talking about him but see him for themselves. This is a super star. This is somebody who should be on the Court. Republicans should allow the American people to see this man for what the people of Oklahoma and litigants in the courtrooms have known for many years: This is a special man.

Last year, as part of the 20th anniversary of the Oklahoma City attack, Judge Garland and some of his fellow prosecutors were awarded the Reflections of Hope Award by the Oklahoma City National Memorial. The honor is awarded to those who exemplify the belief that "hope can survive and blossom amidst the tragedy and chaos."

That is the hope Merrick Garland brought to Oklahoma in the aftermath of that vicious day. We are reminded of Judge Garland's contributions in securing justice in Oklahoma City and wherever he has gone. He is a brilliant man. He is academically brilliant. He is a man who was not given anything on a silver platter. In my meeting with him, I asked him how he handled the situation at Harvard. It is an expensive place. He said: Well, among other things, I sold my comic book collection.

Now, that does not sound like much to most people. But those coins, for example, that my little brother—we are separated by 22 months—has been collecting since he was a little boy mean a lot to him. Most of them are not worth too much. Some of them are.

Merrick Garland collected comic books. One of my best friend's sons collects comic books. It is something they do. It meant a lot to him. He had to get rid of them to get through college. He has inspired those around him through his hard work and commitment and fairness always. That is why it is so disappointing that Republicans are denying this man the common decency of a hearing so the American people can see him.

Why not let Merrick Garland speak for himself at a hearing? Why not let him make his own case to the American people and their elected Senators? There is no excuse to delay his nomination any longer. Senate Republicans should give Merrick Garland the hearings and the vote he deserves. Republicans need to simply do their job.

BOKO HARAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to say just a brief word on another subject. Last week marked another horrible anniversary, the 2-year anniversary since the terrorist group Boko Haram invaded a school in Nigeria and took away 300 little girls. They were girls. They were not young women. They were little girls.

The world watched as parents of the girls pleaded for help. People all over the world, including First Lady Michelle Obama, rallied behind the campaign "Bring Back Our Girls." Despite the global outcry, most of these girls—the vast majority of these girls—are still missing 2 years later. But here is the horrible part about this—the shocking fate of some of these girls.

It has been a couple of years. They are older—teenagers. Boko Haram is weaponizing them, turning these little girls—they are now not so little—into suicide bombers. According to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, or UNICEF, in the 4 countries where Boko Haram operates, the number of children used in bombing attacks has sharply increased from 4 in 2014 to 44 last year. That record will be broken this year.

Nearly one out of every five bombers where Boko Haram is active is a child.

Seventy-five percent of the child bombers are girls. As a father and grandfather of 19 children, I am sickened by what has happened to those schoolgirls. Although 2 years has passed since the abduction, the world must not forget the evil of this organization. We must be as resolved as ever to fight terrorism wherever it rears its ugly head. Whether it is ISIS or Boko Haram, we cannot stop. We must be vigilant.

Mr. President, the Chair announce the business that we are going to proceed with today.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Vermont.

OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING ANNIVERSARY AND NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we are going to remember the victims and families whose lives were forever changed by the bombing in Oklahoma City 21 years ago. This homegrown terrorist attack—this bombing shook our Nation to its core. In fact, it remains the worst act of homegrown terrorism our Nation has endured.

The destruction and the loss of life were overwhelming. This photograph I have never forgotten. The firefighter is carrying the limp and bloodied body of a toddler from the wreckage. Those of us who are parents and grandparents know the joy we have had in caring for children this age. You can only imagine the sadness of that firefighter. It symbolized the horror of the attack: 168 innocent lives perished that day; 19 of them were children.

The impact, of course, and the loss in the Oklahoma City community was enormous. Nearly everyone knew someone who had lost a friend or family member. The city's emergency services and their victims support resources were quickly overwhelmed. As the days went by and the needs mounted, it became clear that the existing State and Federal resources were simply insufficient to respond to such a massive attack.

So to respond to the victims' needs, I proposed, and Congress passed, the Victims of Terrorism Act of 1995. Among important matters, the legislation I wrote created an emergency reserve as part of the Crime Victims Fund to serve as an emergency resource in the wake of an act of terrorism or mass violence. Even though every one of us, Republicans and Democrats alike,